

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE ECONOMY IS PICKING UP

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, my purpose tonight is to say a few words about a 10-day visit to Africa that the Presiding Officer, and I, and four other Members of the Senate completed last Friday. But I listened with great interest to the distinguished Senator from Illinois. I did not want him to leave on such a sad note about the economy, and I thought I would give him some late-breaking news.

The Wall Street Journal today has a headline: "Manufacturing Expanded In August."

The manufacturing sector expanded for the second consecutive month in August, providing further evidence that the economy's hardest-hit sector may finally be on the rebound.

I thought it would be important that the Senator have that in mind because we are all deeply concerned about the number of Americans who are looking for jobs and do not have them.

The President talked about that on Labor Day. Every one of us, Republican and Democrat, feel that way. This is a piece of good news.

The Wall Street Journal said today:

The Institute for Supply Management said its monthly survey of manufacturing conditions rose to 54.7 from 51.8 in July. A result above 50 generally indicates expansion. Many key segments of the report, meanwhile, showed similar strength, including components that measure new orders for manufactured goods and overall production. The results came on the heels of other positive manufacturing news in recent weeks. . . .

Now, this is the Wall Street Journal, not the White House talking, including the Federal report last week that showed new orders for durable goods or items built in the last 3 years or longer, so they rose 1 percent in July.

Now, obviously we are all concerned about manufacturing jobs disappearing. They have been disappearing for a long time. I remember when the Saturn plant moved to Tennessee in the mid-1980s. It hired 5,000 people. If it had done that 30 years ago and built the same number of cars, it would have needed to hire 30,000 people.

So while manufacturing is up, manufacturing employment is still down and is a source of great concern to all of us. I thought that piece of good news might be interesting to the Senator from Illinois and others tonight.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. ALEXANDER. I wish to comment very briefly on education, which we are debating, and the Senator spoke eloquently about it. I was Governor of

my State. I was U.S. Secretary of Education for awhile. The facts are basically these: Federal funding for education has been consistently up, under Democrats and under Republicans.

It must be confusing to people who hear us debate in the Senate because it sounds as though we are reading off completely different history books. The fact is, it is up, and State funding is either down or level.

It is important for teachers, principals, and others in their communities to know that the real pressure they are feeling is not from Federal dollars, which are up, but from State dollars, which are level or down. The Federal Government funds about 7 percent. Seven cents out of every dollar that goes for elementary and secondary education in America comes from the Congress. Ninety-three cents out of every dollar comes from the States or local government. So that is the real problem.

The Congress recognized that this year by appropriating a large amount of money for the States. I think it was \$20 billion that we sent to the States on a one-time basis. For Tennessee, it was about \$400 million. That is a lot of money for us. Our State used that, half of it in the rainy day fund and half of it in Medicaid. That took a little pressure off Medicaid. That helped education.

So it is important for people to know that in all of this debate, Federal funding is up. I, for one, want to look at Leave No Child Behind this year and next year, its first 2 years of operation. I was not here when it passed. I was not here to vote for it as the Senator from Illinois said he did. If it turns out after a year or two of operation that it is indeed a federally unfunded mandate, then I am going to be one of those Senators who wants to add money to fix that problem.

I spent a lot of time as a Governor saying do not send me a rule without money. I do not think it is good to leave the impression that somehow the Federal Government is not funding education. We only fund 7 percent of elementary and secondary education, and that funding is up. It is the States that are having problems, and States have a variety of options for dealing with that.

Many States have cut taxes over the last 10 years. That is a good policy if it can be done, but if it is done, it comes right out of education usually.

HIV/AIDS IN AFRICA

Mr. ALEXANDER. My purpose this evening is very briefly to make a few comments about the visit to four countries in Africa that six Members of this body took during the last 2 weeks of August. The delegation was led by the majority leader, Senator BILL FRIST of Tennessee. It included the distinguished Presiding Officer, the Senator from Minnesota. I was there and three others. We visited four countries:

South Africa, Mozambique, Botswana, and Namibia. It was an eye-opening and, for me, an eye-popping experience in many cases.

I have the privilege of serving as the chairman of the Subcommittee on African Affairs, so I am very interested in Africa. It was my second visit there in the last 3 years. Before I make a few comments about it, I want to simply observe how much we owe Senator FRIST, our majority leader, for teaching us a great deal not just about Africa but about the HIV/AIDS problem which was the subject of our visit to Africa.

Senator FRIST has been there a long time. When nobody else much was talking about HIV/AIDS, he was. He helped change some very important minds in this body. He has been an important adviser to the President of the United States and is an inspiration to us. When we left to come home after 10 days, he stayed for 5 days, went to Kenya and Sudan, and operated on people who have very little medical care, which he has done every year. We owe him a lot for his leadership on the subject.

Within a few weeks, the Congress will be considering the nomination of Randall Tobias to be the new AIDS czar, the person in charge of what we are going to try to do. Also, Congress will almost surely fund President Bush's recommendation that we spend \$15 billion in 14 African and Caribbean countries to fight the disease which we call HIV/AIDS. It will be my purpose in our subcommittee and as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee and the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, to make sure this taxpayer money, the largest public health expenditure ever, will be spent wisely. This evening, in summary fashion, while it is still fresh in my mind, I will make a few suggestions to Mr. Tobias, who is not yet confirmed by the Senate. I hope he will be. I know in this quiet time he is not allowed to do anything or say anything out of respect for the Senate, and it is a good time for him to make a plan for a fast start. If I were to make a plan for a fast start for Mr. Tobias, President Bush's designated AIDS czar, to be considered for confirmation by this body shortly, these would be my suggestions:

No. 1, I suggest Mr. Tobias go to Africa. I don't see how it is possible to understand the enormity of the disease if you do not go to Africa. The disease has delivered a death sentence to 29 million Africans, a number so large that it is hard to imagine. Go to Africa in order to make good spending decisions. Go to Africa in order to cut red tape. A commander of a major battle should be where the action is. While there, show some respect for the African way. We are very proud of the American way; the Africans are proud of their way. It is a little different.

When in Namibia, where we were, I suggest you play the Namibian national anthem and leave it to the local